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Complaint

regarding attempts by PRA to unlawfully and abusively collect a debt allegedly owed by Plaintiff, and this conduct caused Plaintiff damages.

- Plaintiff makes these allegations on information and belief, with the 2. exception of those allegations that pertain to a plaintiff, or to a plaintiff's counsel, which Plaintiff alleges on personal knowledge.
- While many violations are described below with specificity, this 3. Complaint alleges violations of the statutes cited in their entirety.
- Any violations by Defendants were knowing, willful, and intentional, 4. and Defendants did not maintain procedures reasonably adapted to avoid any such violation.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- Jurisdiction of this Court arises pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331, 15 5. U.S.C. § 1692(k), and 28 U.S.C. § 1367 for supplemental state claims.
- This action arises out of Defendant's violations of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692 et seq. ("FDCPA") and the Rosenthal Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, California Civil Code §§ 1788-1788.32 ("Rosenthal Act").
- 7. As PRA does business in the State of California, and committed the acts that form the basis for this suit with the intent to cause effects in the State of California, this Court has personal jurisdiction over PRA for purposes of this action.
- 8. Venue is proper as PRA does business in the County of San Diego, the acts at issue took place in the County of San Diego, and PRA has a business location in the County of San Diego, in the central district of San Diego.

PARTIES

- Plaintiff is a natural person, an adult, and resides in San Diego County, 9. California.
- 10. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that Defendant PRA is a Delaware limited liability company, based in Virginia and doing business in the State of California.

- 11. Defendant PRA is a person who uses an instrumentality of interstate commerce or the mails in a business the principal purpose of which is the collection of debts, or who regularly collects or attempts to collect, directly or indirectly, debts owed or due or asserted to be owed or due another and is therefore a debt collector as that phrase is defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6).
- 12. Defendant PRA, in the ordinary course of business, regularly, on behalf of himself, himself, or others, engages in debt collection as that term is defined by California Civil Code § 1788.2(b), is therefore a debt collector as that term is defined by California Civil Code § 1788.2(c).
- 13. Defendant PRA claims that Plaintiff is obligated to pay a debt, and therefore Plaintiff is a "consumer" as that term is defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(3).
- 14. Plaintiff is a natural person from whom a debt collector sought to collect a consumer debt which was due and owing or alleged to be due and owing from Plaintiff, and is a "debtor" as that term is defined by California Civil Code § 1788.2(h).
- 15. This case involves money, property or their equivalent, due or owing or alleged to be due or owing from a natural person by reason of a consumer credit transaction. As such, this action arises out of a consumer debt and "consumer credit" as those terms are defined by Cal. Civ. Code § 1788.2(f).

FACTS COMMON TO ALL CAUSES OF ACTION

- 16. On June 9, 2011, PRA filed a complaint ("State Court Complaint") in the Superior Court of California for the County of San Diego against Mr. Thomas, in the matter of <u>Portfolio Recovery Associates, LLC v Allen L. Thomas</u>, et al, case number 37-2011-00068402-CL-CL-EC.
- 17. A copy of this June 9, 2011 State Court Complaint is attached as Exhibit A.
- 18. In the above June 9, 2011 State Court Complaint, later served on Mr. Thomas, PRA alleged that PRA furnished "purchases and/or cash advances" to Mr.

Complaint

Thomas on a credit card account issued by PRA, and that PRA was entitled to an award of attorney's fees.

- 19. In fact, PRA did not ever furnish "purchases and/or cash advances" to Mr. Thomas on any credit card, nor did PRA issue any credit card to Mr. Thomas, and PRA had no legal basis to request attorney's fees.
- 20. PRA did not list any creditor other than PRA in the above April 11, 2011 State Court Complaint, and by doing so PRA represented that PRA was in fact the "original creditor," or the party issuing credit, to Mr. Thomas.
- 21. The "least sophisticated debtor" would in fact be confused or mislead as to the identity of the "original creditor" on the account alleged by PRA in the above June 9, 2011 State Court Complaint.
- 22. In the above June 9, 2011 State Court Complaint, PRA also claimed a right to recover \$8,536.76 under a theory of Money Lent.
- 23. Neither PRA nor any predecessor of PRA lent money to Mr. Thomas in this amount.
- 24. In the above June 9, 2011 State Court Complaint, PRA also claimed a right to recover \$8,536.76 under a theory of Goods, Wares and Merchandise.
- 25. Neither PRA nor any predecessor of PRA provided goods, wares or merchandise valued at this amount to Mr. Thomas without being paid.
- 26. In the above June 9, 2011 State Court Complaint, PRA also claimed a right to recover \$8,536.76 under a theory of Account Stated.
- 27. Mr. Thomas never entered into an account stated with PRA or with any predecessor of PRA.

ALLEGATIONS SPECIFIC TO CERTAIN CAUSES OF ACTION FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF

(Violations of the FDCPA by PRA)

20. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates herein by reference the allegations contained in the paragraphs above.

Complaint

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- Defendant PRA violated the FDCPA. Defendant's violations include, 21. but are not limited to the following:
 - 15 U.S.C. §1692e by making a false, deceptive or misleading a. misrepresentation in the collection of a debt;
 - 15 U.S.C. §1692e(2) by misrepresenting the character, amount and b. legal status of a debt;
 - 15 U.S.C. §1692e(5) by threatening to take an action that cannot legally c. be taken or was not intended to be taken;
 - 15 U.S.C. §1692e(10) by use of a false representation or deceptive d. means to collect a debt;
 - 15 U.S.C. §1692f(1) by collection of an amount not expressly e. authorized by an agreement creating a debt, or by law.
- Plaintiff is entitled to actual damages sustained as a result of 22. Defendant's conduct, in an amount according to proof; to statutory damages of \$1,000; costs of the action; and reasonable attorney's fees, all pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §1692k.

SECOND CLAIM FOR RELIEF

(Violations of the Rosenthal Act by PRA)

- Plaintiff repeats, re-alleges, and incorporates by reference all the 23. allegations contained in the paragraphs above.
- 24. Based on information and belief, Defendant PRA's acts and omissions violated California Civil Code § 1788 et seq, including, but not limited to the following sections: California Civil Code §§ 1788.17 and 1788.13.
- Based on information and belief, Defendant's violations of California 25. Civil Code § 1788.17, which incorporates several of the provisions of the FDCPA, include, but are not limited to, the following: Defendant's violations include, but are not limited to the following:
 - 15 U.S.C. §1692e by making a false, deceptive or misleading a. misrepresentation in the collection of a debt;

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- 15 U.S.C. §1692e(2) by misrepresenting the character, amount and b. legal status of a debt;
- 15 U.S.C.§1692e(5) by threatening to take an action that cannot legally c. be taken or was not intended to be taken;
- 15 U.S.C. §1692e(10) by use of a false representation or deceptive d. means to collect a debt;
- 15 U.S.C. §1692f(1) by collection of an amount not expressly e. authorized by an agreement creating a debt, or by law.
- Defendant also violated the Rosenthal Act at Civil Code § 1788.13 by 26. making a false representation that the debt alleged may be increased by the addition of attorney's fees, when in fact no such fees may legally be charged.
- Defendants' violations of the Rosenthal Act were willful and knowing, 27. thereby entitling Plaintiff to statutory damages pursuant to Civil Code § 1788.30(b).
- As a proximate result of the violations of the Rosenthal Act committed 28. by Defendant, Plaintiff is entitled to any actual damages pursuant to California Civil Code § 1788.30(a); statutory damages in an amount up to \$1,000.00 each pursuant to California Civil Code § 1788.30(b); and, reasonable attorney's fees and costs pursuant to California Civil Code § 1788.30(c) from Defendant.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays that judgment be entered against Defendant PRA, and pray for the following relief:

- An award of actual damages pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(1) against Defendant PRA and for the Plaintiff;
- An award of statutory damages of \$1,000.00 pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 2. 1692k(a)(2)(A) against Defendant PRA and for the Plaintiff;
- An award of actual damages pursuant to California Civil Code § 3. 1788.30(a) against Defendant PRA and for Plaintiff;
- 4. An award of statutory damages of \$1,000.00 pursuant to California Civil Code § 1788.30(b) against Defendant PRA and for Plaintiff;

5. An award of costs of litigation and reasonable attorney's fees, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(3) and California Civil Code § 1788.30(c) against Defendant PRA; and

6. Such other and further relief this court may deem just and proper.

Respectfully submitted,

DATED: May 16, 2012 /s/ Stephen G. Recordon

STEPHEN G RECORDON
Attorney for Plaintiff ALLEN THOMAS

Complaint

EXHIBIT A

Case 3:12-cv-01188-WQH-JLB Document 1 Filed 05/16/12 PageID.9 Page 9 of 12

		PLD-3-001
ATTORNEY OR PARTY WITHOUT ATTORNEY (Name, Stale Bar of CIR LAW OFFICES, LLP MICHAEL J. MIXER, Esq. TARA MUREN, Esq. 8665 GIBBS DR STE 150, SAN DIEGO CATELEPHONE NO: (800)-496-8909 E-MAIL ADDRESS (Optional): ATTORNEY FOR (Name): PORTFOLIO RECOVERY ASSOCIATION SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUSTREET ADDRESS: 250 EAST MAIN STREET ADDRESS: 250 EAST MAIN STREET AND ZIP CODE EL CAJON CA 92020 BRANCH NAME EAST COUNTY JUDI PLAINTIFF: PORT FOLIO RECOVER DEFENDANT: ALLEN L THOMAS	Bar#: 99073 Bar#: 260154 92123 File No.: 355085-8 FAXNO. (Optional): (858)-496-5977 ATES, LLC INTY OF SAN DIEGO EET EET ICIAL DISTRICT	EAST COUNTY DIVISION 2011 JUN -9 PM 1: 29 CLERK-SUPERIOR COUNTY, CA
CONTI	RACT DED COMPLAINT (Number): DED CROSS-COMPLAINT (Number):	
Jurisdiction (check all that apply): X ACTION IS A LIMITED CIVIL CASE Amount demanded X does not e exceeds \$ ACTION IS AN UNLIMITED CIVIL CASE ACTION IS RECLASSIFIED by this and from limited to unlimited	10,000 but does not exceed \$25,000 E (exceeds \$25,000)	CASE NUMBER: 37-2011-00068402-CL-CL-EC
1. Plaintiff* (name or names): PORTFOLIO RECOVERY ASSOCIATION ASSOCIATION ASSOCIATION ASSOCIATION ALLEN L THOMAS 2. This pleading, including attachments and companies are competed as a companies as a competed as a companies are companies as a c	t* (name or names): exhibits, consists of the following number of ent adult LIO RECOVERY ASSOCIATES, LLC	
b. has complied with all licensing	except defendation (1) a bus (2) a confidescribe): (3) an un	in Attachment 3c.
	ss-complaint, plaintiff means cross-complainant and defendant n	
Form Approved for Optional Use Judicial Council of California	COMPLAINT—Contract	Code of Civil Procedure, § 425.12

PLD-C-001 [Rev. January 1, 2007]

07-18-11;01;27PM;

Case 3:12-cv-01188-WQH-J\B Document 1 Filed 05/16/12 PageID.10 Page 10 of 12

	PLD-C-001
SHORT TITLE:	CASE NUMBER:
PORTFOLIO RECOVERY ASSOCIATES, LLC v. ALLEN L THOMAS	
defendants and acted within the scope of that agency or employment.	
 5. Plaintiff is required to comply with a claims statute, and a. has complied with applicable claims statutes, or b. is excused from complying because (specify): 	
6. This action is subject to Civil Code section 1812.10 Civil Code section 29 7. This court is the proper court because a. a defendant entered into the contract here. b. a defendant lived here when the contract was entered into. c. a defendant lives here now. d. the contract was to be performed here. e. a defendant is a corporation or unincorporated association and its principal place of f. real property that is the subject of this action is located here. g. other (specify):	
 8. The following causes of action are attached and the statements above apply to each (each of more causes of action attached): Breach of Contract Common Counts Other (specify): 	complaint must have one or
9. Other allegations:	
 10. Plaintiff prays for judgment for costs of suit; for such relief as is fair, just, and equitable; an a. a. a. a. a. a. a. a. a.	nd for
11. The paragraphs of this pleading alleged on information and belief are as follows (spec	cify paragraph numbers):
	A MUSIUM E OF PLAINTIFF OR ATTORNEY)

Case 3:12-cv-01188-WQH-J\B Document 1 Filed 05/16/12 PageID.11 Page 11 of 12

RTTITLE: FOLIO RECOVERY ASSOCIATES, LLC v. ALLEN L THOMAS	CASE NUMBER:
2ND CAUSE OF ACTION—Common Count	ts
ATTACHMENT TO X Complaint Cross - Complaint	
(Use a separate cause of action form for each cause of action.)	
CC-1. Plaintiff (name): PORTFOLIO RECOVERY ASSOCIATES,	LLC
alleges that defendant (name): ALLEN L THOMAS	
became indebted to 💢 plaintiff 🔲 other (name):	
 a. X within the last four years (1) X on an open book account for money due. (2) because an account was stated in writing by and between was agreed that defendant was indebted to plaintiff. 	ween plaintiff and defendant in which it
b: X within the last two years four years (1) for money had and received by defendant for the use (2) services and materials rendered at the special instance defendant promised to pay plaintiff the sum of \$	and benefit of plaintiff, for work, labor, ce and request of defendant and for which
the reasonable value. (3)	d to defendant and for which defendant
the reasonable value. (4) for money lent by plaintiff to defendant at defendant's (5) for money paid, laid out, and expended to or for defer request.	request. ndant at defendant's special instance and
(6) other (specify): for credit card purchases and/or cash advances on the credit Plaintiff for which Defendant was billed monthly and failed to under the Federal Fair Billing Act applicable to such account et Seq.)	o dispute as required
CC-2. \$ 8,536.76 , which is the reasonable value, is o	due and unpaid despite plaintiff's demand
plus prejudgment interest	percent per year
from (date): CC-3. X Plaintiff is entitled to attorney fees by an agreement or a statute	
of\$	
according to proof. CC-4. Other:	
oo-a. [_] outer.	
	D 4
	Page 4

www.courtinto.ca.gov

Case 3:12-cv-01188-WQH-JLB Document 1 Filed 05/16/12 PageID.12 Page 12 of 12 CIVIL COVER SHEET

%JS 44 (Rev. 12/07)

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE REVERSE OF THE FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS LLEN THOMAS				DEFENDANTS PORTFOLIO RECOVERY ASSOCIATES, LLC					
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff San Diego (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES) (c) Attorney's (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number) Stephen G. Recordon (CSB 91401) 225 Broadway, Ste. 1900, San DCA 92101 (619) 232-1717			Diego,	County of Residence of First Listed Defendant (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY) NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE LAND INVOLVED. Attorneys (If Known) 12 CV1188 WQHWMC					не
II. BASIS OF JURISI	DICTION (Place an "X"	in One Box Only)		TIZENSHIP OF		AL PARTIES			
□ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff	■ 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government	Not a Party)		(For Diversity Cases Only en of This State	PTF DEF	Incorporated or Pr		for Defenda PTF 4	ant) DEF 4
☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant	☐ 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizensl	nip of Parties in Item III)	Citize	en of Another State	□ 2	Incorporated and I of Business In		 5	D 5
			1575	en or Subject of a reign Country	03 03	Foreign Nation		0 6	□ 6
IV. NATURE OF SUI		Only) PRTS	FC	ORFEITURE/PENALTY	BAN	KRUPTCY	OTHER	STATUT	TES
☐ 110 Insurance ☐ 120 Marine ☐ 130 Miller Act ☐ 140 Negotiable Instrument ☐ 150 Recovery of Overpayment	PERSONAL INJURY 310 Airplane 315 Airplane Product Liability 320 Assault, Libel & Slander 330 Federal Employers' Liability 340 Marine 345 Marine Product	PERSONAL INJUR 362 Personal Injury - Med. Malpractica 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability 368 Asbestos Persona Injury Product Liability PERSONAL PROPER 370 Other Fraud 371 Truth in Lending 380 Other Personal Property Damage Product Liability PRISONER PETITION 510 Motions to Vacata Sentence Habeas Corpus: 530 General 535 Death Penalty 540 Mandamus & Oth 550 Civil Rights	Y 61 62 62 62 62 62 62 62	O Agriculture O Other Food & Drug Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 Liquor Laws Regs. O Occupational Safety/Health O Other LABOR Fair Labor Standards Act D Labor/Mgmt. Relations Labor/Mgmt. Reporting & Disclosure Act Railway Labor Act O Railway Labor Act D Railway Labor Act Nemper Labor Litigation Empl. Ret. Inc. Security Act MMIGRATION Naturalization Application Habeas Corpus Alien Detainee Other Immigration Actions	422 Appe 423 With 28 US 423 With 28 US 424 With 28 US 425 With 28 US 425 With 28 US 425 With 28	eal 28 USC 158 drawal SC 157 RTY RIGHTS rrights at emark SECURITY (1395ff) a Lung (923) C/DIWW (405(g)) Title XVI 405(g)) ALTAX SUITS s (U.S. Plaintiff efendant)	400 State R 410 Antitru	eapportion st and Bankin erce attion attion to Tradition	ang acced and acced and acced and acced and acced access acc
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